

# North Road Medical

Caring medicine to the whole family

## What is Asthma?

Asthma is long term condition that can be controlled, but currently cannot be cured. Asthma affects the airways of the lungs causing them to swell and become narrower and create mucus which makes it more difficult to breathe. One in ten people in Australia has asthma, that is over 2 million people. It affects people of all ages. Some people get asthma when they are young; others when they are older. There have been 389 deaths due to asthma in 2013 (0.3% of all deaths). That's a death rate of 1.5 per 100,000 population.

## Asthma Triggers



Trigger is the word to describe something that can set off asthma symptoms. This could be something that you: **breathe in, catch (cold/flu), feel, do, eat**

Every person with asthma has different triggers.

When a person's asthma is well controlled by following a daily management plan, triggers are less likely to set off an asthma flare up. People with asthma can live happy, healthy and active

lifestyles and participate in all exercise. Some triggers can be avoided, and it is helpful to do so. For example cigarette smoke, moulds and chemicals.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN SOMETHING MAKES YOUR ASTHMA WORSE.

According to the National Asthma Council of Australia, up to 90% of patients are misusing their inhalers.

Misuse will result in poor dose delivery resulting in poor management of your symptoms

### Directors

Dr Patrick Casey  
Dr Noelene Jacka  
Dr Daniel Mann Segal

### Doctors

Dr Lynette Hatherley  
Dr Yulya Gorovy  
Dr Millie Leykin  
Dr Simon Cooper

### Practice Nurses

Linda Gore  
Nurit Tatarsky

### Practice Manager

Rebecca Laver

### Reception Staff

Melissa Sowerbutts  
Jessica Nippard  
Bethany Mannix

### Allied Health:

Physiotherapy - Isaac Spivak  
Psychology - Rochelle Umansky  
Podiatrist - Julie Miller  
Dietitian and Exercise Physiology - Lifestyle Breakthrough

### Onsite Pathology:

Healthscope Pathology

### Surgery Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8am-6.30pm  
Sat: 8am-12.30pm  
Sun: Closed  
Public Holidays: Closed

Online booking available at:  
[www.northroadmedical.com.au](http://www.northroadmedical.com.au)

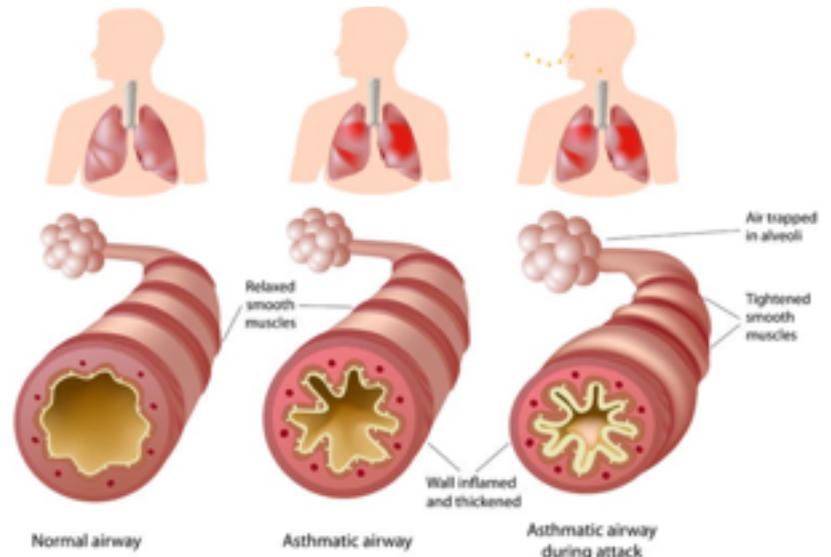
## What are the symptoms of Asthma?

A person's asthma symptoms can vary over time - sometimes they will have no symptoms, especially when their asthma is well-controlled. Symptoms often vary from person to person, but they are most commonly:

- breathlessness
- wheezing
- tight feeling in the chest
- continuing cough

Symptoms often occur at night, early in the morning or during/just after activity.

They are caused by the narrowing of the airways. If your asthma is well controlled, you should only have occasional asthma symptoms.



## Know how your medications work for you!

There is a wide range of asthma medications. It is helpful to understand how these medications help your asthma, and the role they play in keeping you well. The most common are shown here:

	Reliever – Blue/Grey colour
<b>What it does</b>	Relaxes tight airways for up to 4 hours
<b>How it works</b>	Very quickly – in about 4 minutes
<b>When to take it</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— When you have symptoms</li> <li>— Emergency</li> <li>— Before exercise as prescribed</li> </ul>
<b>Helpful to know</b>	Carry it with you always in case of symptoms



	Combination Preventers
<b>What it does</b>	Is a preventer, but also keeps airways open for a longer time
<b>How it works</b>	Fairly quickly, but more improvement with continued use
<b>When to take it</b>	Every day as prescribed
<b>Helpful to know</b>	Prescribed for people who have symptoms even with regular preventer use



	Preventer – Autumn/Desert colour
<b>What it does</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Soothes airways</li> <li>— Less swelling</li> <li>— Reduces mucus</li> </ul>
<b>How it works</b>	Slowly – days
<b>When to take it</b>	Every day as prescribed — even if you feel well
<b>Helpful to know</b>	The key to keeping well with asthma



## What is good asthma control?

If your asthma is well controlled you should:

Experience infrequent daytime symptoms, that is less than or equal to 2 days per week

Only needing to use your Reliever puffer less than or equal to 2 days per week. Excluding the need for your reliever dose pre exercise

Experiencing no limitations of exercise

Experiencing no symptoms during the night or on waking

## A good asthma Management should include

1. Take medication as prescribed
2. Inhaler technique education
3. Carry reliever with you
4. Avoidance of known triggers
5. Annual spirometry
6. Annual review of asthma management plan and asthma action plan - Asthma care plans/management plans are written documents that are developed in consultation with your GP. It outlines the appropriate management for when you are well and also when you are unwell. This can be discussed further with your nurse and GP.
7. Awareness of how to manage asthma first aid
8. Annual flu vaccine (for those 6 months and older)
9. Early intervention at onset of symptoms.

## ASTHMA CONTROL TEST

The Asthma Control Test is suitable for individuals 12 years of age and older. Your Asthma Score will assist your Health Care Professional in helping you reach the best asthma control possible. Asthma Score is a way of working out your level of asthma control. Even if you think your asthma is under control, knowing your Asthma Score is still important. To work out your Asthma Score answer the questions below:

<http://www.asthmaaustralia.org.au/vic/about-asthma/resources/asthma-control-test/asthma-score>